

NEVILLE
ON
INFANT SALVATION.

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AN ESSAY
ON THE
FUTURE STATE OF CHILDREN
WHICH HAVE
DIED IN INFANCY;

OR, SUBSTANTIAL REASONS FOR BEREAVED PARENTS TO
ENTERTAIN A WELL-GROUNDED HOPE OF THE
SALVATION OF ALL CHILDREN THAT HAVE
DIED IN A STATE OF INFANCY.

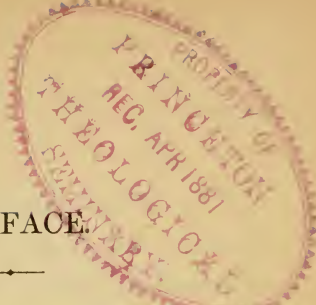
ALSO IS APPENDED
A STRICTURE UPON THE HUMAN SOUL.

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PREFACE.

“OF making many books,” says Solomon, “there is no end ;” but notwithstanding publications issue from the press in rapid succession, there has long appeared to the Author of this brief and imperfect essay, something wanting to soothe the mind of a parent when under the affliction of having been bereaved of a dearly-beloved child whose sorrow is heightened by the conflicting passions of hope and fear as to what may be the state of the departed.

To repress the latter, and to excite a tranquillising confidence of its being at rest with God, through the unlimited merits of the

atonement of Christ Jesus, is the subject of this treatise.

It is in the school of affliction that the minister of the Gospel learns how to comfort those who are in any trouble with the same comfort wherewith he himself has been comforted of God.

WILLIAM NEVILLE.

N.B. Since this Essay went to the press, a similar work has been put forth by a Scotch Clergyman, in which, although the subject is treated in a style very different and less copious with respect to argument, yet the author is happy to observe there is no opposing sentiment; but what he has advanced is fully established, although by a member of another community.

W. N.

AN ESSAY
ON THE
FUTURE STATE OF CHILDREN
WHICH HAVE
DIED IN INFANCY.

It must be apparent to every man of reading and observation, that the doctrines now taught in the Church are more consonant with the sacred Scriptures than what was the case in the time of St. Augustine ; who in speaking upon the fifteenth verse of the seventeenth chapter of St. John,* said that “mundus

* Although our blessed Lord did not at this time pray for the World, he prayed most earnestly for the vilest part of it when upon the cross, see Luke xxiii. v. 34 ; but now his concern was chiefly for his Apostles and Disciples, knowing how severely they would be assaulted by the Devil after his departure, therefore he prays to his Father to “keep them from (πονηροῦ),” the Devil, or the Evil One. Some Dissenters have taken up an idea from this passage, that it is not the duty of ministers to pray for the world ; but St. Paul says, “I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, and intercessions, be made for all men,” 1 Timothy ii. 1.

damnaudarum;" which sentiment was also maintained by that most eminent, learned, and devout godly man, Archbishop Usher, as well as many others of that generation. But such language is now never heard from the pulpit, or issued from the press, by any of the clergy connected with the national Church.

God has not reprobated any, but those who will not be reclaimed from their evil courses neither by his mercies nor his judgments. His having elected a part of the human race "to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour,"* does not imply that he placed an insuperable bar in the way of others, that they should not attain such a state of blessedness; the terms of the salvation of the Gospel are as free for all as the air we breathe, and God designed it to be as universal as the light. Although God chose Abraham and his posterity to be "a peculiar people to himself," he did not do so to the prejudice of other nations; but only acted as the father of a large family, giving a superior education to the elder branches,

* See 17th Article in the Prayer Book.

that they might instruct and set an example of filial obedience to their younger brethren, as is implied in the words of St. Paul, saying, “Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light to them which sit in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes,* which hast the form of knowledge and the truth in the law.†

The Jewish Church was always open and free of access to any of the Gentiles that were disposed to forsake their idols and unite themselves to the people of the God of Israel; and upon their giving a pledge to observe the Mosaic law, they were kindly received, baptized, and placed upon an equality with those that were “born in the land.”‡ So, under

* Meaning the Gentiles which became proselytes.

† Romans ii. 17—20.

‡ See Numbers, ix. 14; xiv. 15. In the days of David and Solomon there were a great number of the heathen who left their relative connexions and joined themselves to the people of the God of Israel, as stated by Dr. Lightfoot.

the Gospel dispensation, God the Father gave a promise to his Son, “that he should see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.”* If he had not done so, Christ might have become incarnate in vain, through the inflexible disposition of the human mind; but as the natural perverseness and pride of the heart of man was well-known to God, He, “in His eternal purpose, secret to us,”† determined to impart such a measure of his heavenly grace, to the elect, as should subdue them unto obedience to the faith of the Gospel, which he intended should be “glad tidings to all people,” without any exception, and that those of every nation, rank, and condition, should have it published unto them, and invited to become partakers of “so great a salvation” equally with those whom he had chosen, having covenanted with his well-beloved Son, that upon his taking the nature of man upon him, and therein suffering the penalty which the law and divine justice demanded for original and actual transgression, he should thereby reinstate the whole

* Isaiah, liii. 11. † See 17th Article.

race of Adam to a reconciliation with Himself, and they should become His possession,* as is well expressed by the late Bishop Hopkins, saying, “The probability of salvation does not stand upon election, but upon two other grounds, viz : the meritorious and all-sufficient procurement of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereby he hath procured salvation for all the world, upon condition of their faith ; for were it not so, how could we preach remission of sins in his name to every creature, if his death were not applicable to all ? If that were not the case, though some should believe, yet, for want of a satisfactory sacrifice offered up, and a price paid for them, they would not be saved. How, then, is it that we seriously call upon all men to repent, and believe the Gospel, that their sins may be blotted out and their souls saved, if Christ hath not procured salvation for all men ? Such calls would be false in us and vain to them ; for we should promise what could not be obtained, because no covenant had been made with, nor any surety to undertake for them ; therefore I say Christ’s

* Psalm ii. 8 ; Ephesians i. 14.

procurement is general; that whosoever believeth upon him shall receive the benefit of his death; and that faith, which is the procuring cause thereof, is attainable by all if you are not wanting to yourselves.”*

But it may be said, the Apostle’s expression, “We are by nature the children of wrath,” and the same is expressed in the Catechism, conveys a contrary idea to the mind, which it is hoped the subjoined exposition will remove. “The word φύσις (nature),” saith the learned Parkhurst, in some instances signifies an infused disposition, as in the second Epistle of St. Peter, 1st chapter and 4th verse, “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.” The same interpretation applies to what the Apostle, St. Paul, says of the Gentiles, “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the Law.”† By which he means that although they had not been favoured with

* Ezekiel, Lord Bishop of Raphoe and Derry, Vol. iii. page 184.

† Romans ii. 15.

that revelation of the divine will which the Jews possessed, yet by the aid of traditionary knowledge, under the influence of “that light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world,”* they practised justice, temperance, and mercy, in a greater degree in many instances than those who possessed superior advantages.

Sometimes the word *nature* signifies hereditary descent, as when the Apostle says, “We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,”† meaning, we are not proselytes, but were born of Jewish parents. From all of which I would observe, that although the innate depravity of human nature leads to consequences, which if not prevented by the grace of God, brings down his “indignation and wrath upon every soul of man that doeth evil,” yet the meaning of the passage before referred to,‡ appears to imply that the descendants of Adam became subjected to

* As Christ is the fountain of all wisdom, so the human intellect is a ray from his brightness, and reason itself springs from this Logos.—Dr. Adam Clarke, St. John, i. 9.

† Galatians ii. 15.

‡ Ephesians ii. 3.

the same condemnation with himself, as is the case by the law of our own nation, that if a man commits treason, he not only forfeits the favour of his sovereign together with his title and estate, but also subjects all his progeny to the same degenerate condition ; but although a traitor involves his descendants for successive generations in irreclaimable ruin, yet it is not so with the posterity of the primordiate of men, for “ God in his love and in his pity, sent redemption unto them,” to recover to the full extent his favour which had been lost ; consequently, although children of wrath by affinity with a delinquent, yet all are born into the world children of grace, of which baptism is the seal, “ through the redemption that there is in Christ Jesus.” So that none will suffer the loss of a heavenly inheritance through imputed guilt ; for although alienated by paternal disobedience, yet reinstated by the second Adam,* from the benefit of which none will be excluded but those who debar themselves by their own transgressions of the divine will,

* Ephesians i. 6.

impenitency, and unbelief; for which sentiment I quote the authority of the great Apostle, who says, “As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.”* St. John bears testimony to the same doctrine, saying, “He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. Upon the testimony of which, the Church says that “Christ, by the one oblation of himself, once offered, made thereby a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.”† And if there is one passage of Scripture more than another which obviates the objection, “that if such were the case, all would be saved,” it is the 11th verse of the 8th chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, which is,—

* Romans v. 18.

† The doctrines of the Church of England are in some respects peculiar, especially in maintaining both the doctrine of election and universal redemption, in doing which she is perfectly scriptural, and I have no hesitation in saying that the principles she maintains are the best edition of evangelical truth ever published to the world.

“Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died,”* which sets forth, that although the redemption of Christ was universal, the application thereof is only partial, because, although all were redeemed, comparatively but few were sanctified by the Holy Ghost, because, like the Israelites, the multitude resist his Holy Spirit, and quench the spark that he had kindled, which he would have increased to “be as the light of noonday.”† But such is not the case with those that die in an infantine state, for they, without an exception, participate both of redemption and sanctification, as did Jeremiah and John the Baptist from the day of their birth ; which instances shew that such a tender age is no disqualification for being partakers of divine grace and heavenly influence, whereby they are constituted heirs of everlasting life, and made meet to inherit

* Why any one should explain the word “perish,” in this instance, different to the same word in the 1st Corinthians, i. 18, can only be explained because it is opposed to their system of doctrines. To perish, means everlasting destruction, as much in one place as in another.

† 1 Thessalonians, v. 19 ; Ephesians, iv. 30 ; Acts, vii. 51 ; Isaiah, lviii. 10.

the kingdom of God ; the more numerous proportion of the inhabitants of which, as our blessed Lord intimated,* consists of those that die before the dawn of reason, which is supposed to be the case with one-third of all that are born into the world.

It has been said that the incapacity of children to believe in Christ as their Saviour precludes their having an interest in his salvation, not considering, when Christ said, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life," that these expressions only have reference to such as should have the Gospel preached to them, and were in a capacity to receive or reject it. God is not a "hard master, expecting to reap where he has not sown, nor to gather where he hath not strawed."

There is no act of immorality of which the law of the land takes a more strict cognizance than that of defamation : but there never was a being either upon or under the earth, that has been so calumniated as our merciful God

* Mark, x. 14.

has been, and that not by the infidel and profane only, but also in the house of his friends, who have represented him as dealing with a portion of the human race in a manner too horrible to be mentioned, being repugnant to the nature of man, and abundantly more so to that of our heavenly Father, “whose property is always to have mercy,” and whose essence is love; nor is it possible for him to act inconsistent with that principle in his disposition towards men. At the judgment day the decision relative to those that may be condemned, will be in perfect accordance with the laws of equity as they are administered by the wisest and best of rulers, for “God will judge the world in righteousness.”*

The punishment of transgressors, it is reasonable to suppose, will chiefly consist in hopeless exclusion from the state of the blessed, together with the pangs of everlasting remorse, under a conviction of having justly incurred that exclusion; as also the rage of corrupt appetites struggling in vain for gratification or relief. Such bitter ingre-

* Romans, ii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12.

dients in the sinner's cup, it is contrary to reason to suppose can ever be the portion of those who never were guilty of personal transgression. No part of the sacred volume denounces eternal separation from the presence of the Lord on any who have not forfeited his favour by acts of disobedience to his known will. But whatever may be said to console the mind of a parent under a painful bereavement, the great enemy of our peace will suggest ideas calculated to aggravate grief, and among others, may induce the mother to suppose, that as the father of the child was not a decided Christian, but a man of the world, therefore, although the infant was free from transgression, yet the sin of his parent would subject him to God's displeasure; but be assured, my Christian friend, there is no cause for you to entertain such a thought; temporal afflictions, in many instances, fall upon children, as the natural consequence of their fathers' iniquitous conduct, but eternal punishments never were, nor never will be inflicted upon any, but for their own wilful acts of disobedience to God. He

hath said, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father."* Nor is there any instance upon record, of the sins of a father being visited upon his children in a direct manner from the hand of God, except where they have followed his iniquitous example, or in cases where, if their lives had been spared, they would have been exposed to very great privations, and have grown up in the practice of idolatry, therefore God commanded the Israelites, when they had taken a city, to spare neither infant nor suckling,† as death to them was a merciful dispensation, and thereby they were taken away from the evil to come, and placed out of the reach of sorrow and of sin, with God eternally shut in.

But, it may be replied, were not the seven sons of Saul put to death for the sin of their father? To which we answer, not for his sins exclusively, but for their own guilty conduct, "for they were a bloody house,"‡ by which expression the sacred historian means, they practised the same persecuting spirit

* Deuteronomy, xxiv. 16. Ezekiel, xviii. 20.

† 1 Samuel, xv. 3.

‡ 2 Samuel, xxii. 1.

towards the people of God as their father had done. We have a remarkable instance that the son doth not bear the iniquity of the father, in the case of Abijah, the descendant of wicked Jeroboam,* of whom it is said, "He made Israel to sin," yet one of his family came to his grave in peace, because in him was found "some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel," and an early death was the means (divinely appointed) of exempting him from impending calamities which were coming upon his father and the family.

Whensoever a son walketh differently to paternal ungodly example, he receives honour both from God and man, of which Josiah, the son of Amon, was an illustrious instance. His "father did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and trespassed more and more;" but his son was as eminent for piety as he had been notorious for iniquity. So also Hezekiah was one of the most godly kings recorded in Scripture history, yet his father Ahaz was wicked to such a degree, that he was denied burial in the sepulchres

* 1 Kings, xiv. 13.

of the Kings of Israel, which was always considered to be an extreme degradation.

The foregoing instances, together with others that might be mentioned, are undeniable proofs of what has been stated, that the iniquities of the fathers are not visited upon the children except in cases of filial wickedness, or for their special benefit, as has been shewn.

There is a remarkable instance of the tender regard which God has for young children, in his forbearance to destroy Nineveh, because there were in it “six score thousand persons which did not know their right hand from their left,”* consequently, had not contributed to the quantum of iniquity in the place; and it is deserving of notice, that, although they were descendants of idolatrous heathens, yet, parental transgression did not exclude them from Divine compassion, which shews the great mistake of supposing that the heathen are debarred from the covenant mercies of God, although the contrary is expressed by the Psalmist, “The Lord is

* Jonah, iv. 11.

good unto all ;” or, as it is in the Prayer-book, “The Lord is loving unto every man, and his tender mercies are over all his works ;” * viz. : the whole race of man, from one end of the earth to the other, through all succeeding generations.

As the descendants of Adam, human nature is equally alike in all, without a shade of difference, though branched out as a number of rivulets flowing from the same source, all having an equal degree of the same impurity as the fountain that produced them ; for “sin is in all,” † it is an intertexture in our constitution, as much so as a venomous quality is natural to a scorpion, or a disposition to devour is the property of the tiger, which is exhibited when at an age to do so ; and it is the same with the human species. While in an infantine state, the innate prin-

* Psalm cxlv. 9.

† *καὶ αὐτῶς εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὁ θάνατος δὴλθεν ἐφ’ ὧπαντες ἡμαρτον*, ΡΩΜΑΙΟΥΣ, v. 12. The translation is, “And so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned ;” but the other reading, “Sin is in all,” gives the most correct idea of the passage. It cannot be said of a new-born infant that it hath sinned ; but it may be said there is sin in it, as a mortal poison working death.

ciple of sin is in embryo, and as it has not risen to a state of action, God in his tender compassion, has been pleased to term even those of extremely wicked parents, “Poor innocents!”* by which it may be reasonably supposed that they were not excluded from his love and mercy, but that he would receive them to himself at the time when their lives were barbarously taken away, having previously renewed them by his Holy Spirit; for, although sanctification (or being made meet for glory) is in general a progressive work, carried on by the use of God’s holy word and sacraments, as subordinate means under the influence of his heavenly grace, yet the power of God in restoring the soul to his own likeness is as independent of secondary causes as when he created the world out of nothing:—“He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.”† Equally so is the power of God in effecting a work of grace in the soul. If he is pleased to say, “I will, be thou clean,” it then becomes pure as light from the sun, in less time than the twinkling

* Jeremiah, ii. 34 ; xix. 4. † Psalm xxxiii. 9.

of an eye, and when disembodied, is exalted to “be as an angel,”† and takes its rank with the “spirits of just men made perfect.” How exhilarating is the idea of having a beloved child associated with Abraham, Moses and the Prophets, the Evangelists and Apostles, and especially to “behold Christ as he is,” and not only so, but to “be like him,” and to be for ever in his presence, in which “there is a fullness of joy and pleasures for ever more.” The prospective hope to a godly parent of going to the object of his affections in such a state of blessedness, exceeds, beyond comparison, all that the riches and honours of this world ever afford to those that possess them : and it is certain that they who dwelt in holy fellowship upon earth will recognise each other in heaven.

The foregoing is sufficient to console a bereaved parent by the exhibition that has been given of the love of God ; but as the mind under affliction is, by the suggestion of Satan, fertile to invent desponding thoughts, it may be said, “The event was so unex-

† Luke, xx. 36. See Collect for Innocents’ Day.

pected, that the dear babe had not been baptised, and we have read and heard so much upon the ceremony of baptism being essential to salvation, that the omission distresses my mind greatly ;” and perhaps you may take some little blame to yourself for having delayed to have the child initiated into the Church by an attention to that ordinance of Divine appointment ; but as the omission did not occur by a wilful disregard thereof, you need not make any unhappy reflections upon yourself on the account of it ; and even if, for want of being better informed, you undervalued the institution, and considered an attention to it a matter of no moment, nevertheless, as the departed was not responsible for, nor in any respect accessory to the omission, no unhappy consequences would follow on account of your inadvertency ; for although baptism is an ordinance appointed by Christ, and by the observance of it the baptised enters into a federal relation with God, and fellowship with his Church, yet he is not restricted within his own institutions (to convey the benefit intended thereby), as our

blessed Lord proved to the Pharisees, when they complained of his Disciples plucking the ears of corn on the Sabbath day : he referred them to what David did, when he was under a pressing necessity for food, “ and took of the shew-bread, which it was not lawful for any to eat but the priests only,” and yet both himself and his men that were with him were considered blameless ;* because what is done, or omitted doing, when occasioned by unavoidable necessity, and not in contempt of God or his holy law, nor any injury to man, is no transgression of the Divine will. Men have ever been disposed to attach more importance to ceremonies than God intended ; hence he despised and abrogated those of his own appointment.† Our merciful Saviour never designed it should be understood that the salvation of a soul should depend upon any outward observance whatsoever ; but upon “ the renewing of the Holy Ghost,” who effects the good pleasure of his will either with or without any secondary cause, as

* Matthew, xii. 4.

† Isaiah, i. 14 ; Numbers, xxviii. 11. ; Lamentations, ii. 6.

seemeth him good. But no means should be omitted that he hath appointed. Duty is ours, events are with God.

Baptism in the Christian Church is of the same import as circumcision under the Mosaic dispensation. David had a son of which God said, he "shall surely die," or, "dying he shall die," and he was in a dying state seven days and then expired, which being previous to the time appointed for the ceremony of the Jewish rite to be performed,* he had never been initiated into fellowship with the Church; yet his father confidently said, "I shall go to him, but he will not return to me," which was saying, "though I am deprived of enjoying that

* Dr. Delaney remarks that Aristotle observes that many infants die before the seventh day, and for that reason they were not named until the eighth day, as they then could have more confidence of their living. Had God appointed an earlier day for circumcision, the ordinary mortality of children from other causes would have been imputed to the performance of that rite. The eighth day was appointed as being a period least dangerous to the child, and it was not to take place sooner, because, say the Jewish writers, the infant was not considered perfect until that time; for which reason animals were not offered to God till the eighth day after their birth. Exodus, xxii. 30.

happiness by having his society upon earth, which I hoped for, yet I shall rejoin his departed spirit in heaven, to partake with him of eternal felicity.* And that same consideration which appeased David's sorrow should also console the mind of every true christian.

Whatever Christ appointed it is incumbent upon every professing christian to duly observe, at the same time it must be understood that baptism does not insure eternal life to the recipient, nor the want of it, where the ceremony has not been contemptuously neglected, (in the case of an unbaptised adult person) incur the privation of everlasting happiness, as is well expressed by one of the most learned and godly divines that ever adorned the English church.

* Even the best and wisest of the heathen, who had never been instructed in the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, comforted themselves with an idea under bereavements, that they should meet with those they loved in a future state. "Cato, of Utica, said, O happy day when I shall join myself to that divine company of great souls who quitted the earth before me. There I shall not only find illustrious personages, but also my Cato. His soul has not left me, he has only gone before me into a country where I shall soon rejoin him."

He says the condition of life (by which he means the future state of the soul) is double, first, principle, second, faith, third, accessory baptism; and calls it accessory because not absolutely essential to eternal life as faith is, therefore it is omitted in the latter part of our Lord's address to the apostles. He does not say he that is not baptised shall be damned, but he that believeth not. Faith is so important that the unbeliever though he be baptised yet he will not be saved but eternally lost.

Except a man become a new creature, or, in other words, "be born of the Spirit," no privileges or religious duties will avail him anything as to acceptance with God.

Circumcision was formerly both a privilege and a duty to the Jews, for thereby the covenant of grace was sealed to them. By virtue of which belonged the adoption, the glory, and the service of God, and the promises; so far it was available, but as to salvation it availed nothing to any one whose heart was not circumcised.

Baptism, hearing the word, and prayer, are

privileges and duties necessary to be observed but as to promoting acceptance with God, they avail nothing to the observer of them, if under the power of unbelief, and in an unregenerate state.*

“Some have the outward sign and not the inward grace. Some have the inward grace and not the outward sign. We must not commit idolatry, by deifying the outward element.†

The penitent thief who expired upon the cross had never been a disciple, nor had he ever been baptised.

Without the moral regeneration of the Holy Spirit, no man can enter into the kingdom of heaven. Thus plainly theologised our Lord to Nicodemus. “To day thou shalt be with me in paradise.”—Thus no less plainly spake the same Lord to his fellow-sufferer upon the cross. According, then, to this two-fold statement, the penitent thief must have been morally regenerated of the Holy Ghost, or he could not have entered into paradise. But

* The Rev. David Clarkson, B. D., Fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge, A. D. 1696.

† Archbishop Usher’s Body of Divinity, page 385.

this same man was never baptised. Therefore moral regeneration must have been communicated to him through some other means than baptism.*

“That Spirit which works by means will not be tied to means.”†

From all that has been said, this is the sum, viz., that no doctrine was ever stated, nor any representation given out to the world, of the disposition of God towards men, upon a more substantial base of divine truth, than as the most affectionate “father pitieth his children,” so hath our adorable and loving Saviour, (who “took up little infants in his arms, pressed them to his bosom, and blessed them,”) opened the gate to everlasting life, unto all those which are taken out of this world, before they could “discern their right hand from their left,” of every nation upon earth, as certain as that the patriarchs, prophets, and “noble army of martyrs,” are now before the throne of God in glory everlasting.

* George Stanley Faber, B. D.: *Primitive Doctrine of Regeneration*.

† Bishop Hall.

A STRICTURE UPON THE HUMAN SOUL.

It is very natural for us to form our ideas of things, of which we have no knowledge, except by report, to assimilate them to those with which we are familiar. So when we speak of the soul of an infant after its separation from the body:—as the latter requires a progression of time before it arrives at maturity, we are led to suppose, if our thoughts ever turn to the subject, that the immaterial property of man, must necessarily undergo a gradual advancement, previous to arriving at such a state of perfection, as it is qualified to attain unto, and as is essential to a glorified condition. Not considering that as the soul is an emanation from the Deity, it is as perfect in nature at the time of infu-

sion into the mortal tenement, as it ever will be, though not in degree, as to powers of comprehension, or capacity for the fruition of those "pleasures which flow at the right hand of God," as both the resource and the faculty will be progressive, as the divine attributes become developed to its sensitive perception, which will continue to be the case through all eternity. The soul of a child while an inhabitant of a mortal body, is like a brilliant light in a dark lantern, but when released from the cell in which it had been encased, it will shine forth with as much lustre as one which had departed at full age, for as God hath said "all souls are mine," and that he is the father of them, therefore, as they emanate alike from the same original cause, there is no inequality, but are as uniform as a number of gold sovereigns from the same die, and although physical qualities and education make a great distinction among men, they avail nothing in a disembodied state; there the faculties of the immortal spirit will possess as great a splendour in Lazarus as in Solomon, with respect to capacity.

But notwithstanding all glorified spirits are upon an equality, as being partakers of the divine nature, yet there is a vast difference as to rank and dignity; as taught in the sacred Scriptures, which say, "that as one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead." If St. Paul had not given us this intelligence, our own reason would have dictated the conception that such eminent saints of God as Moses, Daniel and Isaiah, took a higher degree and rank among the heavenly host, than Manasseh, Sampson, or Jephtha; and also, in our own generation, it is both scriptural, and consistent with the analogy of things, to suppose that those who have been most active to serve God and their generation according to the talent given unto them, will receive "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," than such as loitered by the way, or that have passed through the world (as is the case with all infants), like a transient meteor; but all equally alike indebted to the sovereign, free, unmerited grace of God, and the atonement of Christ,

for admission into the kingdom of heaven, there to sing "Allelujah, unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins, in his own blood, to him be glory, and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen."

PUBLICATIONS
BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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